

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 091357

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ORIGIN EA-04

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /005 R

66611

DRAFTED BY: EA/LC:AFANTIPPAS:DTM

APPROVED BY: EA/LC:LMRIVES

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R 032002Z MAY 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 091357

FOLLOWING REPEAT PEKING 574 ACTION SECSTATE INFO
PHNOM PENH PARIS MOSCOW HONG KONG 5 APR.

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 574

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11562

TAGS: PFOR, CB, CH

SUBJECT: SIHANOUK COMMENTS ON RETIREMENT FROM POLITICAL LIFE

REF: HONG KONG 3817 (NOTAL)

1. FOLLOWING MAJOR RECEPTION FOR KHIEU SAMPHAN AT GREAT HALL
OF PEOPLE APRIL 3 (REFTEL), SIHANOUK HOSTED EVENING GATHERING
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PAGE 02 STATE 091357

AT HIS RESIDENCE FOR SELECTED MEMBERS OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS

AND PRESS. SIHANOUK AND KHIEU SAMPHAN WERE SEATED SIDE BY SIDE ON SOFA FACING DIP CORPS ARRAYED ON STRAIGHT CHAIRS. ACCORDING TO JOURNALISTS WHO ATTENDED, BOTH SIHANOUK AND KHIEU SAMPHAN MADE A GREAT SHOW OF MUTUAL AFFECTION.

2. THE PRINCE TREATED THE GROUP TO A SPEECH WHICH WAS VINTAGE SIHANOUK. HE SAID HE HOPED TO GET OUT OF POLITICS AND SERVE AS PUBLICS RELATIONS REPRESENTATIVE FOR GRUNK. NOTING THAT ROYALTY WHO ENGAGE IN POLITICS OFTEN LOSE THEIR HEADS, SIHANOUK LOOKED AT SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN FRONT ROW, MADE THROAT CUTTING GESTURE, AND SAID HE DID NOT WANT TO MEET SAME FATE AS ROMANOV. HE WANTED, HE SAID, TO BE LIKE QUEEN ELIZABETH II AND CONCERN HIMSELF WITH DOGS AND CAMERAS. HE ALSO OFFERED TO TRAVEL TO THE UN IN HIS PR CAPACITY WHERE HE WOULD "ATTACK THE U.S., THE UK, REACTIONARIES AND ZIONISTS." SIHANOUK OFFERED THE OPINION THAT SOUTHEAST ASIA HAS TOO MANY CORRUPT GOVERNMENTS, AND THAT GRUNK WAS ONE OF A VERY FEW HONEST ONES. HE DESCRIBED KHIEU SAMPHAN AS A GOOD KHMER.

3. LOCAL OBSERVERS VIEWED SIHANOUK SOIREE AS A SOP TO THE PRINCE WHO HAS RATED A POOR THIRD IN PEKING ACTIVITIES SURROUNDING THE KHIEU SAMPHAN VISIT. THE GENERAL IMPRESSION HERE IS THAT SIHANOUK HAS SLIPPED RATHER BADLY WITH THE CHINESE AND THAT PRC MAY BE RETHINKING ITS STRATEGY TOWARD CAMBODIAN SITUATION, ALTHOUGH DIRECTION OF THAT RETHINKING IS STILL FAR FROM CLEAR. (IN THIS LAST RESPECT, WE HAVE HEARD SECONDHAND FROM FRENCH EMBASSY SOURCES HERE THAT THEY EXPECT SIHANOUK TO BE ON THE RIVIERA IN THE NOT TOO DISTANT FUTURE.)

4. POLES TELL US THAT KHIEU SAMPHAN WILL PROCEED FROM HERE TO PYONGYANG AND THEN ON TO MOSCOW AND PARIS. THEY SPECULATE HE WILL BE DISCUSSING AID ARRANGEMENTS IN PYONGYANG AND MOSCOW AND MAY EVEN CONTACT LON NOL ELEMENTS IN PARIS.
BRUCE
UNQUOTE RUSH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: RETIREMENT, SOCIAL RECEPTIONS, SPEECHES, GOVERNMENT IN EXILE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GarlanWA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE091357
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: EA/LC:AFANTIPPAS:DTM
Enclosure: DG ALTERED
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740107-1004
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740575/aaaacpiy.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: HONG KONG 3817 (NOTAL)
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GarlanWA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 APR 2002 by shawdg>; APPROVED <31 JAN 2003 by GarlanWA>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SIHANOUK COMMENTS ON RETIREMENT FROM POLITICAL LIFE
TAGS: PFOR, CB, CH, (KHIEU SAMPHAN), (SIHANOUK)
To: ABIDJAN MULTIPLE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005